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"Economy of Work and Life." Under his treatment of the question, this can scarcely be objected to; yet he by no means satisfies us that a vastly greater economy of work and life is not attainable under the individualistic than under the socialistic régime. The prospect held out by the new gospel of individualism, as expressed in the closing paragraphs of Mr. Spencer's *Principles of Sociology*, is more alluring, and probably more attainable, than anything which the socialist has to offer.

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*La Coopération: Conférences de Propagande.* Par CHARLES GIDE.

Paris, Librairie de la Société du Recueil Général des Lois et des Arrêts, 1900. — 315 pp.

The well-known Professor of the University of Montpellier, who is also *chargé de cours à la Faculté de Droit* in Paris, has brought together, in this modest volume, ten addresses delivered within the last twelve or thirteen years, on coöperation, and has added to them a very appreciative paper on "The Prophecies of Fourier." Announcing at the beginning of this address that he is to speak of a "fool," and even of "the most complete fool to be imagined," and justifying this statement by quoting Fourier's forecasts of an ocean turned into lemonade and an earth illuminated by four new moons, Professor Gide goes on to instance other prophecies of Fourier which have, in truth, anticipated our own age and shown themselves to be the highest reason. Such were his predictions that one might soon leave Marseilles in the morning and reach Paris by evening, and that the isthmuses of Suez and of Panama would be pierced by canals. It is, however, with the phalanstery and the association of labor, of course, that Professor Gide is mainly concerned in this judicial estimate of Fourier's work.

The ten *conférences de propagande* were brought together as a contribution to the literature of the Universal Exposition of last year, and they make no pretense of being a complete treatment of all phases of coöperation in France. Nevertheless, they treat the most important points in its past and present, with a sane outlook into its probable future. The address on this last point indicates the chief difficulties which coöperation has to meet in France. "The first is the spirit of division, that fatal spirit which seems to be a constitutional infirmity of our race." Any one who has seen M. Gide himself presiding, as at Paris in 1900, over a tumultuous assembly of coöperators (the kind

who like to talk all at once with great vehemence) will easily believe that the coöperative spirit is too frequently absent from French societies of coöperative name. But as in the president's chair, so here, Professor Gide preserves the philosopher's calm and the firmness of the man of science in all his zeal of propaganda. Socialism and the revolutionary spirit are two other great causes of the backwardness of French coöperation. But, despite the potency of these three causes, Professor Gide has faith in the future of coöperation in his country. He is himself of that elect band who choose to dwell on the coöperative ideal, when they address societies of consumers or producers, rather than on points of bookkeeping or matters of buying and selling. Vansittart Neale and G. J. Holyoake are his brothers in spirit, not the directors of the English Wholesale Society. But with his main reliance on ideas, he is faithful to humble fact and duly concerned to give it proper place. The student of coöperation in France will not find a better statement of the record, the present situation, and the strength and the weakness of the movement than is given by this unpretending but very readable and entirely trustworthy volume.

NICHOLAS P. GILMAN.

MEADVILLE, PENN.

*An Inquiry into the Conditions relating to the Water Supply of the City of New York.* By the MERCHANTS' ASSOCIATION OF NEW YORK, 1900. — xxxix, 627 pp.

This large volume is typical of the best and, at the same time, the worst features in American public life. It is probably the most elaborate, painstaking and scientific work yet produced by public or private authority on the water supply or any other important department of an American city. The fact that the investigation was undertaken by a voluntary association of merchants and carried out entirely under the direction — and also at the expense — of this body shows, as has been shown so often before, that improvements in the public service in this country usually come from private initiative, rather than from trained expert public officials. Such private initiative cannot, however, generally be invoked except in the face of actual or imminent public wrong of the most flagrant sort.

The story told by the work under review is simple, yet startling. On August 16, 1899, the commissioner of water supply of New York presented to the board of public improvements for confirmation a contract with a private water company — the Ramapo Company — for